

/207 cont. /

- 354 The hearth, around which the Kirghiz /Kazak/ love to sit, not only when eating, but also when conversing, is called "otbosy." There is a concept of happiness connected with it, and for this reason a sacrifice is given to it on certain occasions (see wedding).

342
798 The yurt plays an important role in the life of the Kirghiz /Kazak/. The paternal yurt ("ul'kun chengarak") is considered sacred. Judgments of important /208/ questions affecting the whole clan take place in it. The wife of a son who has received his allotment is obliged to come to his father's yurt after the birth of a child, to bow there three times, and to put fat in the hearth.

[606]

[782] The Kirghiz /Kazak/ often swear by the yurt

("kottukadam uyumde aiz etemen, ar' kimnei uz' de uzike meshet" -- "I swear by the sacred yurt, my yurt is a temple of God").



Kirghiz /Kazak/ children by a yurt (from a photograph by Bebenin).

342
672 Any person in a yurt is considered to be under the protection of the master of the yurt, and

[291]
[492]
[516]

to offend the former is to insult the master. It is the custom, for example, to hitch gift animals to the door of the yurt, and if any sort of misfortune results from this (for example, if a horse kicks someone who is passing) the master of the yurt does not answer for it. And if something bad is caused by the horse of a newcomer, the latter answers for this before the court of the biy, since he is required to hitch the horse at the back of the yurt.

342 In general the yurt plays an outstanding role in the life of the Kirghiz /Kazak/, since it is the place where he passes his entire life and where his family relationships and those of his everyday life take their form.

/208 cont. /

342 arshin and more in thickness. Above these walls there is a row of wooden beams, on which several crossbeams are fastened to support the ceiling. The latter is made of /209/ brushwood, reeds, and grass, and layers of sod are put on it. The kstau have no roofs. A small door is made in the wall facing the yard. On the opposite side one or two insignificant windows are fashioned -- or more precisely holes with only glass or a bladder stretched over them (1). The building is divided into two halves; the

1. In summer the window frames with the glass or the bladders are usually taken out and stored somewhere to avoid loss or breakage.

front one is the dirtier one in which the stove is placed (usually an unbaked brick one, consisting of two enclosures, in one of which the kettle /kazan/ is set, while the other is used for baking baursaki, melting tallow, etc.). The young rams and calves, the harness of the horses, and piles of other farm equipment are also kept in this half. The back half (two to three sagenes long), two sagenes wide, and 1 sagene high) is almost filled with bunks on which the Kirghiz /Kazak/ eat and sleep. Stakes are driven into the walls, and clothing, the best harness, felt, etc. are

342
353
352
[231] hung on them. At night the mud hut is lighted by a tallow candle /sal'nik/ (a wick with sheep tallow in a cup). From all that has been said of the winter quarters, /illustration appears here/ one can imagine the kind of crowdedness, dirt, and suffocating heat the Kirghiz /Kazak/ have to endure in winter. In general the winter quarters of the richer Kirghiz /Kazak/ in localities without forests differ little from the one described, except that they are cleaner.

343 Close to his own quarters the Kirghiz /Kazak/ builds stalls for the sheep, which have the same structure as the dwelling, except that they lack windows and an oven. In addition two other sod structures are built, one on the order of a storehouse, 000 and the other for the dzhetak laborers. Then there are lighter